Introduction

This native North American evergreen tree found in the southwestern United States reaches 50 to 60 feet in height and forms a broad, pyramidal or rounded canopy. The crown probably spreads to about 20 or 25 feet. The trunk is normally rather short and covered with brown, scaly bark. The foliage has a rich blue coloration which stands out in the landscape against any background.

General Information

Scientific name: Juniperus deppeana
Pronunciation: joo-NIP-er-us depp-ee-AY-nuh
Common name(s): McFetter alligator juniper
Family: Cupressaceae
USDA hardiness zones: 7A through 9B (Fig. 2)
Origin: native to North America
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Uses: hedge; screen; reclamation; specimen; highway median; Bonsai
Availability: not native to North America

Description

Height: 50 to 60 feet

Figure 1. Mature Juniperus deppeana ‘Mcfetter’: McFetter Alligator Juniper
Credits: Ed Gilman, UF/IFAS

Figure 2. Range
**Foliage**
- **Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** entire
- **Leaf shape:** scale-like
- **Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see
- **Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen, fragrant
- **Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches
- **Leaf color:** blue or blue-green
- **Fall color:** no color change
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**
- **Flower color:** unknown
- **Flower characteristics:** not showy

**Fruit**
- **Fruit shape:** cone, round
- **Fruit length:** less than .5 inch
- **Fruit covering:** fleshy
- **Fruit color:** unknown
- **Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**
- **Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don't droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns
- **Pruning requirement:** little required
- **Breakage:** resistant
- **Current year twig color:** green, brown
- **Current year twig thickness:** thin
- **Wood specific gravity:** unknown

**Culture**
- **Light requirement:** full sun
- **Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic; alkaline; well-drained
- **Drought tolerance:** high
- **Aerosol salt tolerance:** unknown

**Other**
- **Roots:** not a problem

**Use and Management**
Mcfetter alligator juniper can be used as leyland cypress has been. Plant it on 15 to 20 foot centers to form a solid blue screen. Growth rate is rapid in full sun.

Mcfetter alligator juniper is grown in full sun on well-drained, slightly acid soil. It appears to perform well on clay soils and should be suited for many areas of the southern United States.

**Pests**
No pests are of major concern at this time. However, the plant has not been grown in the east for very long.

**Diseases**
No diseases are of major concern at this time.